

CLASSIFICATION

SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED] 25X1

JCD

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

DATE DISTR. 4 February 1952

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCL. (LISTED BELOW) 2

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

COUNTRY USSR(White Russian SSR)

SUBJECT Automobile Plant at Minsk

PLACE ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

DATE OF INFO. [REDACTED]

REFERENCE COPY

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1. The Minsk (53°50' N/27°35' E) automobile plant was built according to the designs of the Giproredmash. Part of the installations came from Germany, possibly from the Opel Plant in Germany. Part of the machinery is of American origin. Of the plant's Russian machines, the Krasny Proletari Plant in Moscow supplied lathes and turret lathes, a Gorki plant supplied milling machines, the Kirov Plant in Tiflis delivered special lathes, a Kharkov plant supplied special drilling machines, and the Kalibr Plant in Moscow delivered measuring instruments. **
2. The plant had its own power station. Outside power was supplied from Minsk during breakdown periods of the plant station. A connection was also planned with the power plant under construction about one kilometer west of the automobile plant.
3. During the time of observation the Minsk plant manufactured not only finished motor vehicles but also all parts for these vehicles except engines, fittings, radiators, storage batteries and tires. Engine blocks were allegedly also manufactured after the new foundry was put into operation. The plant's monthly production of trailers was 300 during April and May 1949. The indications on the plant's truck output vary considerably. The monthly production may have been 200 units at the end of 1949 and probably increased in 1950.
4. The trailers produced by the Minsk plant were two-axle truck trailers, whose electrically welded frames were equipped with turntables of structural steel (Dreh-schemel). The flooring, the side walls and the front walls of the trailers were wooden. Since around August 1948 the plant had produced 7-ton dump trucks of type MAS-200. The Minsk plant also manufactured 5-ton dump trucks of type MAS-205. This two-axle truck with double rear wheels had a two-cycle Diesel engine, four cylinders, two 12-volt batteries, five gear shifts, one oil pressure tipping installation, and a cable winch in front. The floor of the truck's trailer was 4 x 2.20 meters and the truck had three seats in the driver's cabin. The side and the front walls were made of electrically welded steel plates. The maximum speed was 60 km per hour and the fuel consumption was 35 liters per 100 km. The trucks were delivered with or without tarpaulin covers.

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STATE #	X NAVY	X NSRB	DISTRIBUTION	Class. Charged To:	TS	S C
ARMY #	X AIR	X FBI		Auth.:	HR 70-2	
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5. The plant also produced truck tractors of type MAS-205A with semitrailers of type MAS-5201. This tractor could cover 200 km without refilling its tank, and its maximum speed, when trailers were attached, was 35 km per hour on a level highway. The turning radius of the tractor is 0.5 meters. The total weight of the tractor was 22 tons, including the 12 tons load which it could carry. It was 5.77 meters long and 2.615 meters wide, its wheel base was 3.8 meters, and the distance between its wheels was 1.95 meters. The tractor was a two-axle vehicle with a rear wheel drive and a 110 HP Diesel engine. The 4 rear wheels and the 2 front wheels had 12 x 20 inch tires with 4.5 atmospheric pressure. The hydraulic brake system of the tractor included an instrument for controlling the wheel brakes of the semi-trailer. The operation of the drum-type handbrake was transmitted on the shaft of the gear casing. The coupling supported the load of the front part of the semi-trailer and simultaneously served for secure attachment. Coupling was done automatically while decoupling was done by hand. The trailer was 6.48 meters long and 2.615 meters wide. The height of its useable loading area was 1.48 meters, its bed was 14.85 square meters, its total interior capacity was 14.85 cubic meters.

6. The Minsk automobile plant also produced compressors and perforated steel landing mats. These mats, which were sprayed with green paint, were about 1.2 meters long and 50 cm wide. There were two long grooves on each of the mats' long sides, and the mats were equipped with hooks for connecting them to one another. The mats were shipped in piles of 25 pieces. The plant was supplied with the following raw materials:

Steel ingots.
 Round and bar iron, about ten 60-ton carloads monthly.
 Gray cast iron in bars, four 60-ton carloads monthly.
 Steel and iron plates, tinned sheet iron.
 About 80 engines a week.
 About 2,500 rubber tires a month.
 About 2,500 automobile wheel rims a month.
 Ball bearing shipments from Moscow.
 Storage batteries, radiators, fittings, and steering wheels.

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*[redacted]

Comment. See Annex 1 for list of sources.

**[redacted]

Comment. See Annex 2 for list of the plant's installations and a sketch map, compiled from information supplied by the various sources.

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Legend to Layout Sketch

I. Main production workshop.

- a. Shop producing tools, mechanical equipment and spare parts for the plant's machinery; the reconstruction of the workshop was probably completed by summer 1949.
- b. Repair shop for machines.
- c. Tool depot.
- d. Provisional trailer assembly shop which also houses a galvanizing installation, a hardening shop, and a gear construction department. This workshop has following machinery:

For the construction of trailers:

1 assembly line.
 8 welding stations.
 7 Pittler turret lathes.
 6 lathes of various sizes.
 1 mechanical hack saw.
 1 press of 8 tons.
 4 drilling machines.
 2 grindstones.
 4 gear cutting machines.
 1 axle grinding machine.
 1 bolt grinding machine.

For the construction of compressors:

special grinding machines
 for crankshafts.
 drilling machines.
 milling machines
 4 test stands.
 lathes of various sizes.
 turret lathes,
 6 automatic machines.
 6 horizontal drilling machines.
 circular grinding machines.
 1 planer.

For the construction of gears:

about 12 multiple purpose automatic
 machines.
 14 bevel gear milling machines.
 4 gear grinding machines.
 2 planers.
 20 lathes of various sizes.
 8 drilling machines.
 3 mandrel lathes (chucking reamers).
 4 special lathes for simultaneous
 tooling of 8 to 10 steels.
 6 vertical boring and turning
 lathes.
 1 assembly stand for rear axles.
 1 test stand.

This shop produced front and rear axles, central brakes (sic) and universal joints (Kardan). It also constructed car bodies, assembled trailers on an assembly line, and, probably since early 1949, constructed chassis. The frames after being welded together came on the assembly line where springs and wheels were mounted, as were two axles, each two meters long and about 8 cm thick. Also on the assembly line,

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the frames were sprayed, and the trailer coupling was fitted. After leaving the assembly line the car body was mounted.

e. Office, messhall building and living quarters.

f. Mechanical department, which was equipped with lathes, 3 six-spindle automatic machines of Russian make, 5 index fully automatic machines of German make, 2 drilling machines, 2 circular grinding machines, and dies. The shop produced front and rear axles. The production of engine blocks was scheduled after the building of the mechanical department had been connected with the trailer assembly shop (item 1 q).

g. Trailer assembly shop. The building had not been completed by September 1949. The shop had about 50 machines, most of which were lathes, and it produced axles for trailers and painted automobiles. It was scheduled to produce chassis parts.

h. Pressing and punching shop, which had the following equipment:

1 traveling crab with an 11 ton carrying capacity.

1 hot air blowing installation.

12 welding stations.

1 spray-painting and varnishing shop.

presses, partly of German make:

1 hydraulic press of about 100 tons;

4 presses of 500, 450, 300 and 250 tons respectively; part of these pneumatic presses were still being set up at the beginning of January 1949;

1 die press of 200 tons.

10 spot-welding apparatuses, punches.

1 Spanish punch, about 80 tons.

plate shears,

2 plate bending machines.

drilling machines.

turret lathes including about 15 lathes with a turning length between 1 and 1.5 meters and a height of centers between 20 and 80 cm. The lathes are of Polish, Italian and German make.

1 spring machine.

about 10 grindstones and grinding rollers.

This shop produced all deep-drawn, punched, pressed and perforated parts for truck and trailer construction; it also did pressing work on fenders, radiators, axles and drive shafts.

i. Kitchen and mess hall.

k. Final assembly shop. The conveyor belt of the assembly line was completed. It was about 35 meters long. The workshop itself was completed in February 1949. The shop had the following equipment:

Lathes of various sizes, partly of German make.

1 autogenous welding shop.

1 traveling crane.

drilling machines.

planing machines.

turret lathes.

vertical boring and turning machines.

grinding machines.

6 multiple purpose automatic machines.

4 test stands.

3 electric welding stations.

1 engine depot.

1 depot for single parts.

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2. New forge, which was probably completed during 1949. In 1949 the frame of a 13-meter-high runway for a crane was completed. Also numerous large hammer bases for 1,000 kg hammers were completed. The department was said to have a high-frequency installation for heating metals. The shop produced axles and crankshafts and all other forgings.

3. New foundry. By the end of 1949 this department had apparently been completed and was in operation except for workshop b. The foundry department had following installations:

- Gray-iron foundry. Two founding furnaces were planned for both the eastern and western side of the workshop. The construction of these furnaces was already under way, and they were scheduled to be completed by November 1949. A railroad track ran through workshop building a. Along this track were coke, lime and ore bunkers. These concrete bunkers were between two and eight meters above ground, and some of them were up to five meters deep. A 25-meter wide crane with 50 ton carrying capacity was said to serve for charging the smelting furnaces. It was set up at a height of 13 meters. This gray iron foundry produced engine blocks.
- Steel foundry, which was not yet completed, but which was to produce steel castings.
- Core-making shop and molding shop, which had 30 molding machines, conveyor belts, silo for molding sand, and molding sand dressing machines. Production included cores for all foundry shops.
- Foundry producing tempered steel (Tempergusschalle).
- Foundry cleaning shop. The workshop buildings a, b, c, d, e, were connected by underground conduits for conveyor belts carrying small parts and molding sand for cores. The conveying installation was made of steel and weighs 100 tons.

4. Woodworking department (DOZ), which had about 40 machines, circular saws, 4 to 5 frame saws, planing benches and other woodworking machines. The machines are operated electrically. In this shop driver's cabins, trailer superstructures and platform bodies are constructed.

5. Power station, which had the following equipment:

- 1 British-made and 2 Borsig furnaces. A third Borsig furnace was set up at the end of 1948. The furnaces were fueled in part with coal fed by a conveyor belt and in part with oil.
- 5 to 7 boilers.
- 2 British-made turbines of 10,000 kws each.
- 1 British and 1 German power generating unit with a Diesel engine of German make.

6. Factory producing all bicycle parts. This shop had the following equipment:

Machinery dismantled in the Brennabor Plant in Brandenburg-Kawel
 10 to 15 punching machines
 2 spoke mass-producing machines. The machine had an output of
 30,000 spokes in one 8-hour shift.
 1 blanking tool.
 1 machine for mass-production of screws.
 30 lathes.

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7. Experimental department for the development of new motor vehicles.
8. Laboratory.
9. Technical designing department.
10. Management and plant administration.
11. Guardhouse at the main gate.
12. Telephone switchboard center. The telephone equipment is German reparation material.
13. Fire department.
14. Kitchen.
15. Shop for making sanitation equipment (Sanitaer-techn. Abteilung).
16. Shop for making sanitation equipment
17. Electrotechnical department.
18. Small foundry, which was still under construction in May 1949. This foundry had the following equipment:
 - 1 Cupola furnace.
 - steel furnaces: 1 electrical steel furnace. 3 small coal-fueled furnaces.
 - 2 aluminum furnaces each with an inside diameter of about 1.5 meters and an inside height of about 1 meter.
 - 1 red brass furnace with an inside diameter of about 1 meter and an inside height of about 1 meter.
 - 1 traveling crab
 - 4 machines for shaking molds (Formschuettelmaschine)
 - 2 grindstones
 - 1 sand kneading machine
 - 1 core-making shop with 3 drying kilns
 - casting ladles
 - cutting machines
 - pneumatic hammers

This shop handled all castings for the automobile production in addition to all machine castings for building machines and work for the overhauling workshops.

19. Assembly department. Since early in 1946 this department has had a storage room for boxes, empty bottles, and sulphuric acid for batteries.
20. Storehouse.
21. Foundry cleaning shop, having a sandblast unit, a pneumatic chisel, and 4 grindstones.
22. Pattern-making shop (Modelltischlerei).
23. Garage.
24. Wood drying chamber. A runway of a crane leads into the chamber.
25. Building yard ("Bauhof").
26. Loading ramp.

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27. Gasoline and Diesel fuel dump.

28. Projected bus line.

29. Building for housing the guard personnel.

30/30a. Depot for storing machine tools.

31. Cooling water basin.

32. Fire pond.

33. Old forge, producing types of forgings for automobile production. This shop has the following equipment:

Movable crane.
 4 steam hammers, 3 of American make, 1 of German make.
 4 annealing furnaces, about 3 meters high, covering about
 4 x 3 meters.
 2 annealing furnaces, about 1.5 meters high, covering about
 2 x 3 meters.
 1 straightening shop for chassis.
 1 hack saw.
 2 electric welding stations.
 1 punch.
 1 cutting machine.
 1 bending machine.
 1 bending machine for exhaust pipes.
 1 bending machine for trailer spars.
 1 rotating flange bending machine. (Drehkransbiegemaschine.)

34. "Department for preparatory tooling" (Vorbereitungs Abteilung), which was not yet completed in September 1949. Construction work was probably finished in November 1949. In the main part of the building were two runways for cranes and in the annex one runway 12 meters high. In front of the workshop was a crane runway for unloading the material from the railroad cars. This section was assigned the job of cutting into sections and rough-cutting of rolled materials; and preliminary cutting of plates for the forges and mechanical workshops.

35. Boilerhouse; which was completed about May 1949. This shop had 3 new horizontal boilers, 2 m in diameter, 1.5 meters high, 8 meters long.

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